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Office of the Director of Central Intelligence

TO:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

FROM:

[REDACTED]

SA/DCI

[REDACTED]

NUMBER OF PAGES 8 (including cover sheet)

REMARKS:

[REDACTED]

Attached are some additional materials.

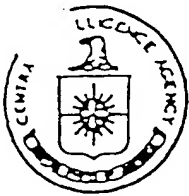
Please give me a call when you have a chance. Thanks.

[REDACTED]

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Top Secret

Intelligence Report

Office of African and Latin American Analysis

27 January 1995

Guatemala: Developments In the Bamaca Case (S)

[REDACTED] claimed that Colonel Julio Roberto Alpirez killed guerrilla commander Efraim Bamaca. We have no firsthand accounts of Bamaca's fate, but have received a number of reports indicating that he was captured alive and killed while in custody by the military. There is significant circumstantial evidence to suggest that Alpirez was at least the intellectual author of Bamaca's death.

January 1995, [REDACTED] reported that [REDACTED] Guatemala. [REDACTED] It was known with the senior ranks of the Army that Alpirez had killed Bamaca. In mid-January 1995, a [REDACTED] confirmed the allegation.

December 1994 report, [REDACTED] reported that [REDACTED] Guatemala. [REDACTED] said that Bamaca had been captured alive in March 1992, but that he is now dead. [REDACTED] also stated that Alpirez, then third commander of Military Zone 18 at San Marcos (where Bamaca was held), took charge of the interrogation.

[REDACTED] reported in [REDACTED] that Alpirez [REDACTED] had personally interviewed Bamaca after his capture. [REDACTED]

Alpirez has a history of human rights violations. Most notably, [REDACTED] report of October 1991 indicated that Alpirez was present when US citizen Michael Devine died in June 1990 while undergoing interrogation at a unit under Alpirez's command. The report also characterized Alpirez as an extremely violent individual who had murdered guerrilla prisoners in the past. [REDACTED]

We cannot ascertain with certainty, however, that Alpirez was responsible for Bamaca's death. We have no eyewitness reports regarding his role in Bamaca's fate.

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Moreover, in the [REDACTED] report cited above, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] interrogated Barnaca, intelligence officers from the Armed Forces General Staff
moved Barnaca from San Marcos and he never saw him again. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Barnaca was taken away in April
1992 by a D-2 (General Staff Intelligence Directorate) helicopter. Given these
discrepancies, it is possible, though unlikely, that the military is offering up Alpirez
as a scapegoat. [REDACTED]

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Intelligence Report

Office of African and Latin American Analysis

27 January 1995

Guatemala: Chronology on the Bamaca Case (U)

- January [redacted] reported that [redacted] Guatemalan [redacted] "it was known within the senior ranks of the Army" that Bamaca was killed by Colonel Julio Roberto Alpirez, third commander of Military Zone 18 (San Marcos) at the time of Bamaca's capture. The government official spoke in mid-January 1995 with [redacted] confirmed the allegation. [redacted]
- [redacted] a review of Guatemalan press for March 1992 revealed a number of articles about an encounter between the Army and ORPA guerrillas near Nuevo San Carlos on 12 March 1992—the incident which involved Bamaca. The articles refer to a guerrilla casualty left on the field, and one paper claims the "leader of the group" was killed. The press reports do not further identify the dead guerrilla. [redacted]
- A 13 January Embassy report says the Guatemalan Human Rights Ombudsman Office on 9 December 1994 submitted its final report on its 30-day investigation into the Bamaca case. The Office concluded that Bamaca was not found to be detained by any Guatemalan officials or the security forces, but that it could not determine whether Bamaca was alive or dead. The Embassy notes that the interviews conducted by the Office appear to have been "very perfunctory and superficial".

[redacted]

[redacted] Bamaca had been captured alive, held and interrogated for about one month, but that he is now dead. [redacted] "the exact method of his elimination is unknown", but that it is unlikely he was dumped at sea by a helicopter due to the cost of such an operation. [redacted] there is no "firsthand evidence" to confirm Bamaca's death. [redacted]

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December 1994 report, [redacted] reported that [redacted] Guatemalan [redacted] said that Bamaca had been captured alive in March 1992, but that he is now dead. He stated that the officer who took charge of the interrogation was Colonel Julio Roberto Alpirez, then-third commander of Military Zone 18. [redacted]

[redacted] said that Bamaca had been captured alive and believed he was still alive 4-5 weeks later. [redacted] but believed Bamaca had been killed. [redacted]

[redacted] Bamaca had been slightly wounded and cooperated with his military intelligence (D-2) interrogators—although information about arms caches later proved to be erroneous. In April 1992, Bamaca reportedly was taken away in a D-2 helicopter and never seen by the junior officer again. [redacted] had observed military intelligence personnel throw live guerrillas from helicopters into the ocean, and suggested this may have happened to Bamaca.

[redacted] the Army has an unspecified number of former guerrillas on its payroll. [redacted] following capture, rebels are given a choice: either collaborate with military intelligence against former comrades or be summarily executed and buried in an unmarked grave. [redacted] these methods have been used by the Army since the beginning of the insurgency, and continue to be employed despite the attention of human rights activists. [redacted] all captured guerrillas—with the exception of those paraded before the media for propaganda purposes—are interrogated for their intelligence value, and in the majority of cases are then killed and buried. As to Bamaca's fate, [redacted] the Army does not have the rebel leader in custody. [redacted] opinion, however, the Army should turn Bamaca, or his remains, over to Jennifer Harbury in order to end the media attention the case is receiving.

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[redacted] reported that an unidentified [redacted] recently related that [redacted] in March 1992 had killed two guerrillas in an armed encounter in Quetzaltenango. One of the dead rebels appeared to have been a commander; he wore a special uniform and new boots, and carried a radio and a weapon. [redacted] could not identify the dead insurgent.

[redacted] and told by the local [redacted] that the dead insurgent was Commandante Everardo.

[redacted] suggests that the Army may have replaced Bamaca's body with the dead insurgent's in an effort to cover up any evidence of torture.

[redacted] Guatemalan [redacted] obtained information from conversations with others [redacted] rather than from personal experience—stated that Bamaca had been captured in March 1992 and taken to a military camp [redacted] that Bamaca's capture was viewed as a great success by the government because at the time he was the only important indigenous guerrilla leader.

the Army later realized the case would become a political propaganda issue for the URNG following the February 1993 testimony before the UN Commission on Human Rights in Geneva of two guerrillas who claimed to have seen Bamaca alive inside a clandestine prison before they escaped.

- In May 1994, [redacted] that Minister of Defense Enriquez gave verbal orders to all military zone commanders to identify clandestine cemeteries and purge intelligence-related documents.

March 1992, [redacted] guerrilla's capture. [redacted] claimed that Bamaca subsequently

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was taken away by unidentified military intelligence officers from the Armed Forces General Staff; the senior officer claims he never again saw Bamaca or heard anything about his whereabouts or status.

reportedly implied to his confidant that Bamaca was in good, if not excellent, health at the time of his capture. expressed the personal opinion that even if Bamaca was dead, the government and the military would not turn over his remains because they would then be open to a flood of requests for the remains of other victims of the long and bloody civil war.

- In early October 1993, former Army specialists (senior enlisted troops) Francisco Solobal and Tiburcio Hernandez, both serving a 30-year sentence for their role in the murder of US citizen Michael Devine, publicly claimed they had engaged in Army-run death squad activity and could provide information on clandestine cemeteries and jails.

the Guatemalan National Defense Staff, worried that such allegations—even if not true—could damage the Army's image at a time when it was making great strides in improving its reputation, sent a senior counterintelligence officer to meet with the imprisoned specialists; these ex-soldiers subsequently admitted to having exaggerated claims of having participated in "death squad" activity.

1993 Guatemalan in mid-May

reportedly believed the accounts of the two URNG members who testified that they saw Bamaca alive inside a clandestine camp.

alive, reportedly stated that Bamaca was would neither confirm nor deny the allegation.

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[REDACTED] reported in early March 1992 that Bamaca had been captured and was in good condition despite a light wound to the arm. [REDACTED] reports Bamaca was treated well by the Army.

[REDACTED] further commented that Bamaca continued to cooperate with the Army, and that news of his capture likely would be kept secret by the Army, which might even claim he was killed in action. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

In the case of Bamaca's fate, the evidence points to the likelihood he was captured alive in March 1992. However, we have no reliable information to ascertain whether he is still alive and being held in a clandestine military prison. According to the testimony of the two guerrillas escapees, Bamaca was last sighted in July 1992. Harbury claims that he was sighted in the presence of Army troops as recently as several weeks ago by farmers in San Marcos, but we are unable to corroborate this. While the Army would have a strong incentive to keep him alive--for his supposed knowledge of ORPA's structure and personnel--and turn him against his former comrades, the possibility exists that he may have died of battlefield wounds and been buried in an as-yet-unidentified grave. The Army also could have executed Bamaca after it extracted from him whatever useful information it sought. The Army, for its part, remains very tight-lipped about this and other similar cases, and is unlikely to open up to a full inquiry on the subject. [REDACTED]

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